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IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Notify the office promptly of any change of address, in order that mailing list and addresses in the Register may be corrected.

SEPTEMBER, 1904.

THE NEXT A. M. A. MEETING.

The next meeting of the A. M. A. will be held at Portland, Oregon, July 11-14, 1905. Applications for membership may be secured at the office of the Society, Room 1, Y. M. C. A. Building, San Francisco.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Royal Commission which has been investigating the relation between human and bovine tuberculosis for the past three years has recently made a partial report. The commission finds that animals infected with tuberculosis derived from man exhibit no gross or histological differences in pathology, nor any perceptible variation in clinical effects from those animals inoculated with bovine tuberculosis. This is contra to the theory advanced by Koch and supported by some observers, and is of importance. Its direct bearing on the milk question cannot be gainsaid, and there should be no modification of the existing legislative restrictions in regard to cattle afflicted with tuberculosis; rather they should be increased and more rigidly carried out. A final report has not yet been handed in by the commission, but there is no reason to believe that the completed work of that body will materially differ from or contradict this preliminary utterance. All cattle in or near communities of men, and especially all cattle on milk ranches and dairies, should be carefully inspected, and at sufficiently frequent intervals.

Two pretty strong lay publications—*The Ladies' Home Journal* and *Everybody's Magazine*—agree with the STATE

ADVERTISING "PROMOTES." JOURNAL OF MEDICINE in believing that to advertise a thing is to "promote its use," and acknowledge that admitting quack-medicine "ads" to their advertising pages would help to swindle their readers and profit the nostrum men. It is certainly unfortunate that some, or rather most medical journals, cannot appreciate the truth of the argument and realize their absurd and undignified course. They claim virtue for their reading pages, but admit their advertising pages to profitable prostitution. Even official organs and journals "owned, controlled and published" by the medical profession are doing the same disgraceful thing. It is a great shock, for instance, to see *American Medicine* "promoting the use" of Fig Syrup by giving it a whole page of space in a journal that is "founded, owned and controlled by the Medical Profession of America"!

In May, *Everybody's Magazine* launched a rather widely advertised campaign against nostrum advertising. A few pages of quack medicine "ads" were dropped and several thousand letters were written to doctors and medical journals, calling attention to the fact. We were strongly tempted to comment on this at the time, but decided to wait and see what happened. Shortly after *Everybody's* gun was fired, the *Ladies' Home Journal* got the range and loosed a highly explosive shell; the article on "Patent Medicines" has been widely copied. Unfortunately for the Curtis Publishing Co., Mr. Bok, in his article in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, chose for special attack one of the very few, if, indeed, not the only one of the host of "nostrums" which probably does not contain any alcohol. This particular one is, we believe, made by a process suggested some fifteen years or so ago by Prof. Hallberg; the alcohol with which the vegetable principles are extracted is replaced by glycerin. Thus was the strength of Mr. Bok's attack very greatly weakened, for his paper was promptly sued for \$200,000, and he was compelled to retract, editorially, in a subsequent number of his journal. He might have said all that he did say, about any one of the nostrums in the table published and which we have reprinted, and been perfectly safe. It is an illustration of a very unfortunate blunder.

In the case of *Everybody's Magazine*, the spasm of virtue was more apparent than real. It is true that they did drop some pretty rank "ads," and for that much they deserve credit. But in their circular letter they say: "We decline to carry any patent medicine or other fraudulent and otherwise objectionable advertise-

ments in our magazine." Dr. Frank C. Todd of Minneapolis called the attention of the publishers to the fact that they were not living up to the claim set forth in their letter, inasmuch as they published the advertisements of such things as "Dent's toothache gum," "Hessler's hair restorer," and the "Morley artificial eardrum," which is claimed to help every case of deafness. We cannot do better than quote Dr. Todd's own letter:

It is hardly necessary for me to point out that by eliminating many quack advertisements and making the claim that you "decline to carry *any* patent medicine or other fraudulent and otherwise objectionable advertisements," you are doing more harm than a magazine containing many such fraudulent advertisements, but making no claim to decency, because many readers will be led to believe that those which you do publish are trustworthy. Such being the case, these fortunate few advertisers should be able to pay well for such consideration. While in your first letter you stated that you declined to carry "any patent medicine or other fraudulent advertisements," in your last you admit your claim to be a myth, but think you should be considered upright because you carry less than some other magazines—on the principle that it is less criminal to steal \$1,000 than to steal \$5,000.

Closely following the action of the two lay journals already mentioned, came the rumor that the United States, through the **THE NOSTRUM AND THE MAIL.** Postoffice Department, was about to do wonders by excluding publications carrying nostrum advertisements, from second-class privileges. There seems to be but little doubt that the Postal Department has full legal right to take such action, if it may; but, knowing the tremendous influence of the nostrum makers, we decided to wait and see just about how much real meat might be found in this particular egg. As we suspected, a microscope will be quite useful to anyone seeking the "meat." If a citizen complains that an advertised medicine is a fraud or its advertising statements are obscene, it will (perhaps) be investigated. If the claim of obscenity or fraud shall be substantiated, publishers will be notified that if they print the "ad." their publications cannot be taken as second-class matter. Thus far the energy of the Postoffice has been devoted to the investigation of tuberculosis and lost manhood "cures." It is extremely doubtful that the alcohol "cures," which contain from 20 to 40 per cent of alcohol, will ever be molested by a lobby-ridden paternal government!

Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, who since leaving this country and his work with Prof. Flexner has been doing research work in Copenhagen, writes to Dr. Weir **SERUM FOR SNAKE VENOM.** Mitchell under date of April 27th, giving an outline of his results.* A goat was immunized against rattlesnake venom by continued injections over a period of several

months. Experiments on guinea-pigs then showed that the serum from this goat would prevent death from *Crotalus* venom even when twelve times the normal lethal dose of venom had been administered to the pig. Three hours after the administration of two killing doses, animals become critically ill, and will die in about thirty minutes if the serum is not employed; the injection of four cc. of the serum ensures the recovery of the animal, and no symptoms are apparent after two days. As a result of his work with Prof. Flexner, and more recently abroad, where he is working under a grant from the Carnegie Institution, he is entirely convinced of the falseness of the claims of Calmette, to the effect that his antivenin, produced as an immunizing serum against the venom of the cobra, is protective against the bite of all venomous serpents. The results of his work are certainly of great interest, and other communications from Dr. Noguchi will be looked for with anticipation of still further advances in our knowledge of the subject under investigation.

A milk supply protected only by a required standard based on chemical analysis, fat percentage, etc., may be not only filthy but also very dangerous. The bacterial content of an average sample is really the only safe indication of the quality of milk; of course assuming that no preservative has been added. That milk and cream containing comparatively small numbers of bacteria can be supplied commercially has already been sufficiently well demonstrated in New York and New Jersey. Time and again it has been shown that the average bacterial content of milk as ordinarily produced and marketed in cities is well over 1,000,000 per cc., often exceeding and generally equalling the bacterial content of sewage. The Boston Board of Health has recently established a bacterial standard and provided for the condemnation of milk or cream found to contain more than 500,000 bacteria per cc. This limit is certainly high enough, and there is grave question as to whether it should not be decreased by 200,000.

A nurse at the Marine Hospital in San Francisco accidentally gave a patient bichlorid of mercury, and the patient died. A **RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION.** police judge held the nurse in heavy bonds. Subsequently the matter came before Dr. Leland, the Coroner of San Francisco, and he took occasion to pass a few compliments to the police judges for the manner in which they fail to support the law in the case of rich or "influential" citizens, but get industriously after one who is without coin or "influence." These are merely the facts. The San Francisco *Chronicle* in its issue for August 6th, commented editorially on

* Univ. Penna. Medical Bulletin, July-Aug.